



**Written Public Hearing Testimony of  
Sharon Palmer, Commissioner  
Department of Labor  
Legislative Program Review and Investigations Committee  
March 4, 2014**

Good Afternoon Senator Kissel, Representative Mushinsky, Senator Fonfara, Representative Carpino and members of the Legislative Program Review and Investigations Committee. Thank you for the opportunity to provide you with written testimony regarding **House Bill No. 5375: AA Implementing the Recommendations of the Legislative Program Review and Investigations Committee on the Reemployment of Older Workers Concerning the Technical High School System.** My name is Sharon Palmer and I am the Labor Commissioner.

I support the concept of this bill, but recognize that there are considerations that must be taken into account before obligating the Department with significant data collection efforts. This bill requires the Superintendent of the Technical High School System to submit a report containing data of current and former students regarding their age and social security numbers, employment status and retention, and earnings both prior to enrollment and after completion. While it would be possible for the Department to produce employment reports to the Superintendent for this group, measuring job retention is complicated. It would require the Department to follow individuals across time and would require the agency to interpret job retention data without guidance as to whether the data regarding job retention is negative or positive. In addition, the Department cannot currently measure wage rates. Our wage records contain only total quarterly wages only, not hours or weeks worked in that quarter. Finally, the Technical High School system is not permitted to use social security numbers with their student records and, therefore, the Department would be unable match them to our wage records.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit written testimony today.